

*Surf-Lines Adventure Courses
Risk Assessments*

Updated December 2009



Canoeing & Kayaking

Climbing and Abseiling

Coasteering*

Surf Kayaking

Mountain Walking and Scrambling

Orienteering

Gorge Walking*

Improvised Raft Building*

Problem Solving

Insurance & Licensing

No pre-prepared risk assessment will replace the continual decision making process and risk assessment that takes place 'on the ground' during outdoor adventure. Surf-Lines Staff are trained and proficient in making these assessments.

* Non-NGB Activity. Staff will be vetted according to their previous knowledge/experience, and/or have completed in-house training and consolidation. Evidence of this must be recorded in the CPD documents.

Surf-Lines Adventure Courses

Risk Assessments - Canoeing & Kayaking

Hazard	Risk	Control Measures	Residual Risk
Water	Drowning	Buoyancy aids issued and worn throughout session. Capsize drill explained and briefing to highlight importance of staying with kayak. Instructors' proficient with many forms of rescue.	Low
Awkward capsize or recovery	Dislocated shoulder	Correct bracing technique taught by Instructor.	Low
Cold water/ weather	Hypothermia	Wetsuit or sufficient warm clothing worn. Spare clothing and group shelter available and warm drink.	Low
Strong tidal stream / wind.	Swept beyond capability to return unaided.	The prevailing conditions and sea state are assessed before a kayaking session is undertaken. A weather report is obtained by internet each morning, so Instructors are forewarned of the weather conditions. Route choice or session plan will be decided on in light of the experience of the group. Instructors will work within limitations of their qualifications and experience.	Low
Prolonged kayaking	Repetitive Strain Injuries/blisters	Teaching of improved technique. Use of low-angle feathered paddle or split paddle.	Low
Lifting & carrying	Back injury.	Verbal warning. Sharing of loads between people. Instruction in correct lifting technique for heavy/ awkward objects.	Low
Other boats & water users.	Collision and injury.	Briefing to raise awareness of boats. Use of suitable training areas. Co-operation with other groups ensures all hazards and boating movements are known before a session is run.	Low
Moving around.	Cuts and bruises.	Shoes worn on session. Careful route choice and timing by Instructor during rock hopping.	Low
Un/ loading kayaks.	Muscle strains, knocks & bangs.	Verbal warning. Sharing of loads between people.	Low

Hazard	Risk	Control Measures	Residual Risk
Closed Kayak & Foot Rests Adjustments	Entrapment	Make sure footwear is appropriate and laces tucked out of way. Match boat size to users. Ensure any balls used for games cannot trap user and give safety brief for games and for getting out of boat. Make sure spray deck handles are on outside if used	Low

Hazard	Risk	Control Measures	Residual Risk
Loose rocks & Stone falls from cliff tops	Head and other injuries	NGB qualified staff, first aid trained. In addition, site specific training where applicable. Instructor shows safe areas for waiting/ watching. All participants are given properly fitted safety helmets, which are to be worn at all times during the session unless express permission is given by the lead Instructor. The Instructor ensures the climbs are safe and clear of loose or potential falling rocks. Calls are used to warn of falling rock.	Low
Falling from a height	Multiple injuries	Use of safe areas; see above. Participants will be issued with well-fitting harness that will be checked by Instructor at suitable intervals.	Low
Abseiling	Rope burn	Participants briefed to stay in control of speed. The Instructor uses safety rope to slow descent if necessary.	Low
Bouldering	Sprains/ fractures	Instructor will use 'spotters' to protect low level climbing.	Low
Climbing/ Bouldering	Muscle strains	Whenever possible a gentle bouldering/ warm up session run to slowly build up confidence and flexibility of participants before any full climbs are attempted. Gentle/ simple climbs will be attempted before more physically demanding ones.	Low
Climbing/ Bouldering	Cuts & bruises	Attentive supervision by Instructor, prompting good technique when necessary and adopting suitable safety measures.	Low
Equipment failure	Multiple injuries	Checks and maintenance in line with BMC/manufacturers instructions and nationally accepted good practice.	Low

Hazard	Risk	Control Measures	Residual Risk
Abseil Device	Getting caught / jamming device	Make sure all jewellery and scarves are removed. Tie up long hair and tidy or remove loose clothing. Use a releasable abseil	Low

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Risk Assessments – Coasteering

Hazard	Risk	Control Measures	Residual Risk
Water	Drowning	Participants will be issued with necessary safety equipment, including wetsuit and buoyancy aid to help flotation. Buoyancy aids are NOT optional. In extreme white water conditions minimal time will be spent in the water.	Low
Cliff and rock falls	Head injury and other injuries	Coasteering route will minimise use of areas of loose rock. Suitable helmets will be worn by all participants	Low
Immersion in cold water and/ or wind chill	Cold shock and hypothermia.	Ensure all participants have correctly fitting wetsuits, helmets and buoyancy aids. Instructors encourage clients to keep moving around and to give themselves time to adjust to the water temperature when they first enter. Sessions shortened if needed. A safety bag is available at all times with spare clothing, group shelter and a warm drink.	Low
Cliff jumps	Winding or injury due to poor landing in water.	All participants are taught jumping techniques suitable for the size of jump. No coasteering route will have jumps that are compulsory. All jumping techniques are demonstrated by the Instructor, with small jumps being used to begin with before larger heights are attempted. The Instructor is nearby at all times. Participants must show that they are capable of jumping effectively and able to land well. Weaker jumpers are encouraged at lower levels with staff next to them to help or pull them back if they slip.	Low
Cliff jumps	Injury due to hitting rock.	Through in-house training and observing conditions on the day Instructors will be able to say whether it is safe to jump.	Low
Sea conditions/ State	Hypothermia	Check forecast and monitor weather and sea state. Instructor to check landings and take into account tidal swells.	Low

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Risk Assessments – Coasteering

Hazard	Risk	Control Measures	Residual Risk
Cliff jumps (max. 25'/ 8m)	Injury through contact or collision with other people.	Participants that wish to jump at the same time, as others must be well apart. Staff will dictate how far this is. No one may jump holding hands.	Low
Seaweed covered or slippery rocks & walking on loose boulders.	Slips and injuries – grazes, bruising, sprains and fractures.	All participants are told to proceed with care and are guided over the best available routes to avoid large amounts of seaweed etc. Each person is told to use hands as well as feet for support to aid balance and safe movement across the rocks. Walking on areas of barnacled rocks is encouraged for maximum grip. When walking on seaweed look for pools or indentations that hold water as these will provide more stable footing The Instructor leads the group, encouraging them to help each other & fore-warning them of obstacles such as wet & slippery rocks.	Low
Strong sea swell & large waves.	Unintentional swim due to being washed off or falling in.	Participants are briefed on prevailing conditions and told what to expect, how to react and what to do in the event of an unintentional swim occurring. Instructor verbally and visually warns participants of incoming waves. Where exposed to large waves/ swell the group will be kept in a safe area until asked to move. A throw line will be at hand at all times.	Low
Barnacles & sharp rock.	Cuts and grazes.	Participants are shown how to place hands and feet. Also shown the best way to get out of the water and what to do when they are being washed around or near to rocks. Demonstration and/ or practice to help learn good technique.	Low
Instructor Injured/ incapacitated	Students isolated, confused, cold	Instructor to brief the student group at the start. Emphasis the name of location, equipment carried and actions on instructor injury. Refer to information card within safety pack and follow instructions.	Low

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Risk Assessments – Surf Kayaking

Hazard	Risk	Control Measures	Residual Risk
Water	Drowning	Wetsuits issued as standard providing flotation as well as warmth. Instructors and participants will wear buoyancy aids and helmets at all times.	Low
Cold water/ weather	Hypothermia	Group are taken through warm up as befits the conditions. Extra warm clothing at hand plus safety bag with group shelter and warm drink.	Low
Other water uses	Collision and injury	Surf session conducted in un-crowded section of beach. Groups are advised of the ethics and rules of kayak surfing along with arm signals for guiding group from beach. Group are encouraged to be aware of their surroundings so as not to put themselves at risk and instructed on the correct way to protect themselves.	Low
Rocks - submerged or otherwise	Collision and injury	Groups are kept away from known areas and are taught the action on capsize as part of their lesson. Risky areas must be agreed with the Senior Instructor in charge of kayak surfing.	Low
Long-shore drift	Carried into rip current/ separation from Instructor & group	The group is marshalled between fixed points on the land or between staff acting as beach marshals. Use of recognised signals is agreed at the start of the session.	Low
Rip Current	Swept beyond immediate reach of Instructor/ away from beach	Careful choice of location at the beach plus careful monitoring of the group and water conditions Group are kept away from likely rips but are taught what to do if they are caught in one. Rips are also pointed out once on location.	Low

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Risk Assessments - Mountain Walking & Scrambling

Hazard	Risk	Control Measures	Residual Risk
Cold and discomfort	Hypothermia	Briefing about layering, not using cotton or jeans and keeping body temperature as even as possible. Recommend thermal and wicking layers. Supply wind and water proofs if necessary. A safety bag is available at all times with spare clothing, group shelter and a warm drink.	Low
Exhaustion, other environmental effects	Hypothermia, risk to whole group	Alternative route choice to cater for different group abilities. Check local forecast. A safety bag is available at all times with spare clothing, group shelter and a warm drink.	Low
Medical conditions (not disclosed)	Health issues, possibly urgent e.g. diabetes	Briefing – check all students before start of the journey	Low
Weather changes	Cold, wet, navigation problems	Obtain up to date weather forecast. Ensure all participants have suitable clothing. Carry appropriate navigation aids and spares	Low
Disorientation (group) Temporarily lost leader Lost for longer periods	Motivation, straying into dangerous terrain, possibility of benightment	NGB qualified staff. Briefings and information given en route – adequate planning and preparation of route card and alternative routes. Keep group in sight on dangerous terrain and when visibility is poor	Low
Slips and stumbles, impact from falling rocks, longer falls	Injuries from falls: Foot and ankle Lower leg and arm Upper leg, torso, head	Adequate briefing and suitable route choice. Obtain up to date weather forecast. Observation of the group throughout the day and give information about moving safely on steep ground	Low

Hazard	Risk	Control Measures	Residual Risk
Environmental – steep slopes, cliffs, rivers	Injury through falls and slips	Careful choice of locations to minimise these risks. A briefing is given by the lead Instructor before the session begins to ensure all participants are aware of the parameters in which the activity must be run.	Low
Unfamiliar terrain	Getting lost	Each participant is shown how to identify prominent features on their map. Navigation teaching is backed up by “What if...?” scenarios. Instructors will monitor progress from suitable location. Instructors implement the overdue procedure to locate whereabouts of groups.	Low
Cold/ wet weather	Hypothermia	Briefing on correct clothing and foot wear. Never less than three in a team allows help to be summoned. If base is away from Surf Lines, a safety bag is available at all times with spare clothing, group shelter and a warm drink.	Low
Awkward terrain	Sprains and fractures	Never less than three in a team allows help to be summoned while third stays with injured person. Instructors implement the overdue procedure to locate whereabouts of groups.	Low

Hazard	Risk	Control Measures	Residual Risk
Loose rocks & stone falls from cliff tops	Head injury/ unconsciousness	Instructor shows safe areas for waiting/ watching. All participants are given properly fitted safety helmets, which are to be worn at all times during the session unless express permission is given by the lead Instructor. The Instructor ensures the climbs are safe and clear of loose or potential falling rocks. Calls are used to warn of falling rock.	Low
Falling from a height	Multiple injuries	Use of safe areas; see above. Participants will be issued with well-fitting harness that will be checked by Instructor before each potential loading.	Low
Abseiling	Rope burn	Participants briefed to stay in control of speed. The Instructor uses safety rope to slow descent if necessary.	Low
Abseil Device	Getting caught / jamming device	Make sure all jewellery and scarves are removed. Tie up long hair and tidy or remove loose clothing. Use a releasable abseil	Low
Water	Drowning	Wear buoyancy aids where appropriate.	
Bouldering	Sprains/ fractures	Instructor will use 'spotters' to protect low level climbing, avoiding areas with awkward landing zones.	Low
Climbing/ Bouldering	Muscle strains	Whenever possible a gentle bouldering/ warm up session run to slowly build up confidence and flexibility of participants before any full climbs are attempted. Gentle/ simple climbs will be attempted before more physically demanding ones.	Low
Climbing/ Bouldering	Cuts & bruises	Attentive supervision by Instructor prompting good technique when necessary.	Low

Hazard	Risk	Control Measures	Residual Risk
Slippery Rocks & Uneven Ground	Slips & Twisted Ankles	Safety brief about walking on uneven and slippery terrain. Start on easy area and monitor group. Each person is told to use hands as well as feet and how to 'spot' each other. Explain to avoid algae and other slippery surfaces and use small stones to walk on. Good route choice	Low
Immersion in cold water and/ or wind chill	Cold shock and hypothermia.	Ensure all participants have appropriate clothing, helmets and buoyancy aids. Instructors encourage clients to keep moving around and to give themselves time to adjust to the water temperature when they first enter. Sessions shortened if needed or kept dry. A safety bag is available at all times with spare clothing, group shelter and a warm drink.	Low

Hazard	Risk	Control Measures	Residual Risk
Water.	Drowning	Buoyancy aids issued and worn throughout session. Instructors proficient with many forms of rescue.	Low
Cold water/ weather.	Hypothermia	Wetsuit, and windproof or sufficient warm clothing worn. A safety bag is available at all times with spare clothing, group shelter and a warm drink.	Low
Raft breaking up whilst on the water.	People hit by logs or barrels.	Groups must wear helmets and buoyancy aids.	Low
Raft breaking up whilst on the water.	Entanglement in the wreckage	Member of staff must be on standby as safety cover, ready to enter the water and have a knife to hand.	Low
Moving around.	Cuts and bruises.	Shoes worn on session. Location cleared of dangers/ dangers made safe.	Low
Logs being moved around.	Injury due to people being hit by logs	Session briefing to include information on correct lifting technique as well as awareness of others during lifting. Appropriate safety gear worn. Group behaviour monitored.	Low
Group unable to control raft.	Inability to return to start point	Either: raft to be on a long tether or safety craft to be available. In some sheltered locations it would be sufficient to have a lifesaver on standby with a throw line.	Low

Hazard	Control Measures
Use of blindfolds	Groups are thoroughly briefed on responsibility towards group safety. Ensure any likely obstacles are specifically related to task. Tutor to intervene if group not proceeding with due care. Waving a hand out in front when walking is a good way of increasing personal safety. Should movement away from the safe area occur the tutor would stop the task and move them back to the task area. Groups are briefed about kit that is not load bearing and not be used as an aid to balance.
Lifting weights and carrying	Any lifting of barrels logs or other heavy weights must be done ensuring that the back remains straight and the legs are bent as per HSE guidelines. Tutors must be able to demonstrate the correct technique.
Lifting of people	Very few tasks require this but where they do the tutor must be in a position to support the head and shoulders of whoever is lifted. Groups often need to be reminded of the risk to the head and back of the person being carried.
Use of helmets	Where task briefs stipulate the wearing of helmets they must remain properly fitted until such time as the tutor asks for them to be removed.
Working near edges, drops, slopes or steps	Where safety equipment is provided it must always be checked for appropriate fitting by a tutor. Groups must be made very aware about the risks of tripping and slipping when in this environment.
Cutting	Scissors are to be used where possible. If a task requires the use of craft knives filleting gloves are also issued and must be worn on the hand holding the object to be cut.
Tasks involving projectiles	Anyone triggering a projectile device or supporting it when triggered must be wearing safety glasses that will be supplied with the task. Where possible soft projectiles such as juggling balls should be used.

Hazard	Control Measures
Use of canes	Groups must be made aware of the risk of impaling when using canes. Where canes need to be pushed into the ground they must be held close to the bottom of the cane whilst pushing is being undertaken.
Use of paints and glue	Where possible these must be child-friendly. If this is not appropriate then suitable space and ventilation must be found.
Circus Skills	Each activity must have an appropriately sized and designated area that will be marked out from the set up guidelines. Where a person is required to balance, a buddy must be on standby as a backup/catcher/supporter and briefed as to where to stand.
National Park Projects	<p>The ranger in charge of the project must conduct a safety briefing for all tools and activities involved in the day. Delegates should be told to wear stout footwear and clothes appropriate for the time of year. Rangers generally do not allow u18s to use tools.</p> <p>The availability of sun block and suitable drinks should also be taken into consideration and must be supplied if necessary.</p>

As always, facilitator judgement is the key factor in assuring a safe and educational session. The activities involved in a problem solving session are wide and varied. The risks outlined here are recognised as very general and may well need to be adapted to each task or event as they occur. There are a wide variety of hazards involved with a spectrum of consequences. Hazards may result in a minor scuff or a major trauma.

Insurance

Surf-Lines hold Public Liability insurance to the sum of £5 million through Jardine Lloyd Thompson

Surf-Lines do not provide Personal Travel or Accident Insurance and recommend that you consult your own insurance company for this.

Adventure Licensing

In order to provide adventurous activities for under-18s Surf-Lines are required to hold a licence issued by the Adventure Activities Licensing Authority. Surf-Lines' licence number is:

L7002/RI129

AAALA can verify this if you contact them at:

AAALA
Tourism Quality Services Ltd.
17 Lambourne Crescent
Llanishen
Cardiff
CF14 5GF
T. 02920 755 715
F 02920 755 757

Accreditation

All Surf-Lines Staff hold appropriate National Governing Body qualifications with the following organisations:

Welsh Canoe Association

British Canoe Union

Mountain Leader Training Board

Royal Yachting Association